

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 00602 171220Z

72

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01

DRC-01 /110 W

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R 171117Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2922

INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 602

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PK, AF

SUBJ: WALI KHAN'S TRAVELS

REF: KABUL 0231

1. ACCORDING BRITISH EMBOFF, BRITISH EMBASSY KABUL HAS
CONFIRMED PAKISTANI PRESS REPORTS THAT NATIONAL
GAME PARTY LEADER WALI KHAN, WHO CAME TO KABUL FROM PAKISTAN

JANUARY 10 FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT, WILL PROCEED TO LONDON
DURING NEXT SEVERAL DAYS TO CONSULT EYE SPECIALIST.
BRITISH EMBOFF SAID THAT WALI, DURING MEETING WITH
BRITISH CONSULAR OFFICER AROUND FIRST WEEK OF JANUARY,
HAD COMPLAINED THAT HIS CHRONIC EYE TROUBLE HAD INTEN-
SIFIED. AT SAME TIME, WALI HAD EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE
THAT HIS PARTY'S CANDIDATES WOULD WIN BYE-ELECTIONS
IN NORTH WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE THEN SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY
8 (THIRD BYE-ELECTION IS TO FILL PROVINCIAL SEAT VACATED
BY NWFP GOVERNOR KHATTAK).

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PAGE 02 ISLAMA 00602 171220Z

2. ALTHOUGH WALI'S EYE PROBLEMS ARE VERY REAL, THERE

SOME SURPRISE THAT HE JOURNEYED TO KABUL ONLY ONE WEEK BEFORE BYE-ELECTIONS, WHICH HAVE NOW BEEN RESCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 17 (ISLAMABAD 0479) REPORTEDLY TO GIVE GOP CANDIDATES BETTER CHANCE. WALI'S ABSENCE PARTICULARLY NOTICEABLE SINCE ONE OF SEATS BEING CONTESTED IS THAT VACATED BY WALI HIMSELF TO MEET CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS BANNING SIMULTANEOUS MEMBERSHIP BY ONE INDIVIDUAL IN BOTH NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLIES.

3. ALTHOUGH GOP MINISTERS AND PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS HAVE SHARPLY CRITICIZED NAP AND ITS LEADERS DURING ELECTIONEERING IN NWFP, GOP TO DATE HAS NOT EXPLOITED WALI'S VISIT TO AFGHANISTAN TO DREDGE UP USUAL ASPERSIONS ON WALI'S LOYALTY TO PAKISTAN. GOP LAW MINISTER IN COMMENTING TO PRESS ON WALI'S VISIT LIMITED HIMSELF TO REMARK THAT "IT IS VERY STRANGE THAT HE (WALI) WAS RECEIVED BY MR. AJMAL KHATTAK AND THE AFGHAN INTERIOR MINISTER IN KABUL". (KHATTAK, WHO FLED TO AFGHANISTAN IN MARCH 1973, WAS ONE-TIME GENERAL SECRETARY OF NAP WHOSE CONTINUED PRESENCE AND ACTIVITIES IN KABUL IS PERIODICALLY DENOUNCED BY GOP LEADERS.) WE SUSPECT THAT SUCH RESTRAINT ON PART OF GOP WILL BE SHORT-LIVED: BHUTTO HAS RARELY NEGLECTED ANY OPPORTUNITY TO EMBARRASS HIS POLITICAL FOES AND WALI KHAN IN PARTICULAR.

4. RE AP CORRESPONDENT JEFFRIES THEORIZING (KABUL 0301) THAT WALI MIGHT BE CARRYING MESSAGE TO DAUD FROM BHUTTO, EMBASSY STRONGLY DISCOUNTS SUCH POSSIBILITY. BHUTO MISTRUSTS WALI (AND VICE VERSA) PROBABLY AS MUCH AS HE DOES DAUD AND IT HIGHLY UNLIKELY HE WOULD ENTRUST WALI WITH DELICATE MISSION TO AFGHANS NOR FLATTER WALI BY ASKING HIM TO ACT AS COURIER.
BYROADE

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